

POLREP #0750th and Hayes Site

743, 745, 731, 729, 738, 740, and 737 50th Street NE
Washington, D.C. 20019

ATTN: RRC, C. Kleeman, M. Welsh, C. Ruleman (DC ECU), S. Smith (DC Fire/EMS),
E. Ralston (NPS)

EVENT: Time-Critical Removal/Continuing Site Assessment

I. SITUATION (as of December 6, 1999):

- A. This Polrep covers Site activities that occurred on 24 November 1999, as well as additional information gathered since the issuance of Polrep 6.
- B. The D.C. Environmental Crimes Unit (ECU) requested EPA assistance with the site located at 50th and Hayes, which was contaminated with waste oil/petroleum, tires, and other flammable materials. It was alleged that ongoing contamination of the site was impacting the environment, including an elementary school located across the street from the property. An initial assessment performed by OSCs Stanton and Boyd in February 1999 concluded that no Removal response action was required, based on the information available. However, in September 1999, D.C. ECU investigators reported that the contaminated soils at the site could be ignited and that, once ignited, the fires were difficult for the D.C. Fire Department to suppress. Based on this report, OSC Stanton determined that a Superfund response action pursuant to the NCP was appropriate and necessary and initiated a Superfund response to erect a fence to limit access to the property and deter ignition of fires.
- C. During the weeks of September 13 and 20, 1999, EPA erected a fence to limit access to the Site. Soil samples were taken to determine the sources of the soils' ignitability, as well as the type and level of potential threat posed by the Site. While analytical results did not indicate that the soils were ignitable, high levels of lead, exceeding EPA Risk-Based Criteria for both residential and industrial soils, were found.
- D. On 24 November 1999, a surveyor was brought to the Site to identify the precise property lines of the lots comprising the portion of the Site that was fenced as part of EPA's Removal action.
- E. Estimated costs (C.O.B. 26 November 1999):

	EST. COSTS	CEILING
ERRS	\$14,104	\$ 50,000
SATA	4,087	15,000
EPA (TOTAL)	6,180	20,000
UNALLOCATED		115,000
TOTAL	24,371	200,000

- F. On 24 November 1999, personnel on-site included the EPA OSC, SATA-1, R.C. Kelly Assoc., Inc.-3, D.C. ECU-1, D.C. Dept. Public Works-2, D.C. Fire Dept-1, Tri-County Industries-4. Weather conditions during site operations were overcast and drizzly with temperatures in the low to middle 50s.

II. ACTIONS TAKEN:

- A. Analytical results from the 21 October 1999 Site assessment visit showed only one lead result outside the fenced area exceeding EPA's typical standards for lead-contaminated soils in residential areas (while no Emergency Removal Guidelines exist for lead, EPA's Removal Program has typically viewed levels of lead contamination in soils above 500 parts per million (ppm) in residential soils and 1,000 ppm in industrial soils to indicate a potential human health threat, warranting further investigation). Soil results ranged from 71 to 2,810 ppm. The result of 2,810 ppm was obtained in front of the fence, on the Hayes Street side of the Site (farthest away from the church, but in closest proximity to the elementary school).
- B. The OSC directed SATA to ascertain whether the soil sample showing high lead levels fell within the 50th and Hayes property line. As a result of this request, the OSC determined that there was some question as to whether the fence erected by EPA included only the property comprising the private lots, or additional District property in front of the Site. SATA recommended a search of District of Columbia records to clarify this issue; the OSC conferred with ORC Goldman and ascertained that deed search and survey operations were included in the access agreement with the property owner. DC records were found to be lacking, and SATA recommended that a surveyor be hired to determine the precise locations of the property lines. The OSC concurred, and a surveyor was hired to visit the Site on 24 November 1999.
- C. Site operations on 24 November 1999 began with a Health and Safety meeting where physical and chemical hazards and daily operations of the site were discussed.
- D. Upon arrival at the Site, the OSC and SATA found that an unknown 55 gallon drum labeled Dexron III/Mercon, Automatic Transmission Fluid had been abandoned in front of the gate at the Site. The drum was full and did not appear to be leaking, yet a new oil stain was observed near it. The OSC notified the D.C. ECU, and Investigator Carl Ruleman arrived on site to address the abandoned drum. D. C. ECU notified the Department of Public Works, D.C. Metro Police, and D.C. Fire Department. Public Works representative David Fletcher contacted Tri-County Industries Spill Response Unit to perform transportation and disposal (T&D) of the drum under contract to the City.
- E. Representatives of Tri-County arrived, uprighted the drum, opened the bung, smelled the contents and dipped an oil dry pad into the drum. Tri-County was under the impression that the drum contained used/burnt transmission fluid. The drum was loaded onto the spill response truck without an overpack and removed from the Site.

- F. R. C. Kelly Associates, Inc. were on site to perform professional surveying of the property boundaries, EPA fence, and sample locations. Previous survey benchmarks were no longer evident, so the surveyors needed to establish lot benchmarks prior to surveying property boundaries, fences and sample locations. Benchmarks were located, and the Site was surveyed. Preliminary results from the surveying indicate that the EPA fence probably encroaches upon the City easement at Hayes Street by approximately 19 feet.
- G. The OSC discussed the encroachment of the EPA fence on the City property easement with Mr. David Fletcher, the representative of Dept. of Public Works who was on-Site to handle disposal of the drum. Mr. Fletcher stated that the fence location currently was not a problem as the fence is enclosing a potentially hazardous area, and offered his assistance in obtaining proper permission for the fence line if needed in the future. OSC Stanton also discussed with Mr. Fletcher the possibility of excavating the contaminated soils in front of the fence, or covering them with an impervious material such as concrete; he and Inspector Smith (DC Fire/EMS) indicated that they would be happy to provide permission for such actions if needed.
- H. The OSC and SATA observed obvious tampering to the gate padlock and vandalism to the fence and no trespassing signs. SATA documented the vandalism. It also appeared that some additional tires and debris had been tossed over the fence since the previous EPA Site visit. At the request of the OSC, SATA took inventory of the tires on site. Approximately 126 tires are currently on site.
- I. Inspector Smith had previously been involved in the response to the fire at Quality Auto Parts. He discussed the events of the response with the OSC. He stated that flames from the fire were orange, blue, green and black, and that he believed that contaminants from the Quality Auto Parts section of the Site, which is across 50th Street from the area currently under investigation by EPA, were likely carried into the soil by the water used to douse the fire. Based upon his observations and concerns of possible contamination at that area of the Site, to which access is currently unrestricted, the OSC determined that additional samples should be collected at the Site. The burned shell of the building has been demolished by the Dept. of Public Works; a group of people, including one child, was observed on the area at the time of this visit. SATA was directed to plan to collect approximately 12 surface/subsurface soil samples at the site at a depth of three to six inches to determine if there is existing contamination at the site. The samples will be analyzed for TAL and TCL.

III. FUTURE ACTIONS:

- A. Based on the observations of the DC Fire/EMS Inspector, the OSC concluded that further sampling was warranted to assess whether there is a threat to public health or the environment on the areas of the Site where access is not restricted. SATA is to collect soil samples at the empty lot and the former building area (demolished area) on behalf of the EPA. Approximately 12 soil samples will be collected from the demolished building area of Quality Auto Parts and analyzed for TAL and TCL. Three samples will be collected and analyzed for lead only, including one of the gravel pile directly in front of the

location of the soil sample that was hot for lead. Upon receipt of analytical, OSC and SATA will review data, and site activities will be decided accordingly.

- B. SATA to provide final trip report describing activities and analytical results from 21 October 1999 Site assessment visit. Once received, the OSC will provide copies to all interested parties.
- C. SATA to receive final maps and data from R.C. Kelly surveyors and provide results to EPA OSC.

COLBY STANTON, OSC
EPA REGION III
PHILADELPHIA, PA